

THOMAS ASHTON.

Biography from the Lehi Centennial History

Thomas Ashton, the son of Joseph and Catherine Sedden Ashton, was born in the township of Parr, Lancashire, England, November 7, 1813. At the age of fifteen years he was apprenticed for six years to the trade of wheelwright, carriage builder, and ship-carpenter. At the expiration of his apprenticeship, he went to work on the Liverpool and London railway, which was being built at that time.

November 20, 1836, he married Mary Howard. He and his wife were the first citizens of St. Ellens to be baptized members of the Mormon Church. They were baptized by Samuel Cryer at St. Ellens, Lancashire, England.

They emigrated to America in 1841, and made their home at Skunk River, Iowa. The family were driven away by the mob and went to Nauvoo. He returned to Skunk River to sell his property, but the mob had possession, and compelled him to sign a deed to the property.

His wife died August 26, 1849, at Pottawattamie, Iowa. She was the mother of five children. He was ordained a priest January, 1841, by Theodore Curtis; ordained a seventy at Nauvoo, 1844, ordained a high priest by Daniel S. Thomas, August 22, 1875, at Lehi, Utah, and received his endowments May 23, 1856, at Salt Lake City, Utah.

On September 25, 1849, he married Sarah E. Mills. She died September 3, 1850, leaving one child.

On February 17, 1851, he married Araminta Lawrence, at Council Bluffs, Pottawattamie, Iowa. They had eleven children.

Before his final move to Nauvoo, he went to work under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith on the Nauvoo Temple. He assisted to build the noted

Mormon boat, the "Maid of Iowa." The family moved to Nauvoo after the death of the Prophet. He took part in all the events of the trying times until the final expulsion. He worked in the wagon shops where the wagons were made for the trip westward. He assisted in the last defense of Nauvoo against the mob, and helped to work the cannon that was made out of a steamboat shaft.

The family left Nauvoo at the final expulsion,, and went to Winter Quarters, passing through the events that happened there until the breaking up of Winter Quarters. Not having means enough to come to Utah, they moved back across the Missouri River to Council Bluffs. Here they raised crops until the spring of 1851, when the family moved to Utah, traveling in the company of Captain Morris Phelps. The company arrived in Salt Lake City, September 27, 1851, and came to Lehi, arriving October 6, 1851.

He took a very active part in planning and making our first water ditches, and was one of our first water masters when there was no salary attached to the office. He was also very active in planning and building our first bridges across Jordan River, and other bridges, also our first meeting and school house. He was a member of the Lehi City Council from 1854 to 1866 inclusive, and was always prominent in adding his means to the outfits of our boys going on Indian raids. He died in Lehi, Utah, January 22, 1903, at the age of 89 years, 2 months, and 15 days.